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**The Handbook Scandal.**  
Judging from descriptions of the handbook establishments that have been printed in The Star, the race track bet game is being played as openly and freely and on as large a scale as ever, perhaps more so. The law, it seems, has no terrors whatever for those who manipulate the bets. There is little pretense at concealment. Thousands of dollars change hands daily. The bookmakers in the long run always win. The police, working on a commission, cannot lose. The more bets they collect the more they make. Their only risk is that of detection, and the penalty for that is slight, a few minutes in the station pending the deposit of collateral and perhaps an occasional appearance in court while the case is being postponed. A professional bookmaker insures continued freedom of action.

The fact is that Washington is being milked by a gambling scheme just as it was in the old days when the lottery thrived. The worst of it is that the money is being lost by people who are not in a position to lose. They are people, as a rule, of small means. Many of them are "playing the ponies" in the hope of securing additional income. Some of them have got the habit through an unfortunate winning. According to reports the government departments are every day canvassed for bets by agents of the bookmakers. Surely this must be known to chiefs of divisions and bureaus. Perhaps there are rules that prevent the actual making of bets during office hours. Surely they should be enforced. And government employees should be warned against taking part in this pernicious game, which is so demoralizing, so likely to lead to peculation.

Court congestion is blamed for the lack of effective prosecution. That surely cannot be the major reason for the fact that practically none of the handbook makers or runners arrested serves a jail sentence. Releasing on probation is simply a perpetuation of the game. The profits are so big that the bet taker can afford to take the slender chance of being severely punished.

This is an intolerable scandal, that such a game should thrive in Washington, at the seat of government, the center of lawmaking. The police have done good work in making arrests, and it would appear that it is up to the courts to administer the law in a way to make it effective and clean up this shameful condition.

**Midwinter Unemployment.**  
President Harding has moved in the matter of relieving unemployment in a practical way by proposing to six of the government departments that work that has been provided for be undertaken now rather than later. This, as the President states, is the worst time of year for labor. Many private enterprises have suspended on account of the season. There is, furthermore, a particular slackness as industry waits on the settlement of tariff questions. It is the President's hope—and doubtless that hope is justified through knowledge of the conditions—that large government undertakings can be pushed ahead of schedule. Millions spent now—in the next six weeks—in labor will be a great boon to the country.

It does not follow from the President's suggestion that the extraordinary efforts made a few months ago to reduce unemployment in the country have failed. On the contrary, they have succeeded in abundant measure. Cities and states have organized and promoted public and private work calling for the services of several million men. Adjustments have been effected to put more men at work on current projects. The percentage of unemployment has steadily diminished. The present emergency is due to the stress of weather, and the President seeks a contribution by the federal government that will lessen to a minimum the distress due to idleness during these next few weeks. Surely his proposal will bring results.

The world would gladly contribute enormously to an increase of the Nobel peace prize if some one could guarantee to deliver the actual goods.

**Farmers in Politics.**  
In some quarters there is growing belief, and very evident apprehension, that the farmers of the country are organizing for political purposes, and that a third party, an agrarian party, is likely to be the outcome of present efforts to better conditions in the agricultural industry. The existence in Congress of an "agrarian bloc," and the effectiveness with which it has functioned, are pointed to as the opening wedge, and on the side lines at the agricultural conference here during the last week there has been a good deal of talk about political organization on a national scale, about a national leadership and a national platform of agrarian demands.

There is nothing in the Constitution of the United States which would prevent the farmers from organizing themselves into a political party, adopting a national platform and nominating their own candidates for President and Vice President and members of the Senate and House of Representatives. But there is that in the spirit and genius of American institutions and the American idea of government which would render such

a program futile and foredoom it to failure. It is the same thing which would render futile and foredoom to failure a national labor party, a national clerical party or a national party organized to promote the interests of cross-eyed men. The American people as a whole are bigger than any section of them, and they never will consent to turn their government over to be administered in the interests of any class or subdivision.

But the best insurance that the government will not be taken over by an agrarian party is to be found in the farmers themselves. Certain agricultural "leaders" may have ambitions along that line, but the real farmers, the fellows who actually till the soil, are as hardheaded and as thoroughly American as a lot of clams. Just now they are in difficulties, and are ready to support a "bloke" in Congress or anywhere else that will help them find a way out, but when conditions return to normal they are going to do their own thinking, and it will be no more possible to herd them at the polls and vote them "en bloc" than it has been in the past. If the American idea of a government of all the people, for all the people, by all the people is to endure until it is endangered by the farmers of the land it will be many a long day before the spirit of Lincoln's Gettysburg address is relegated to the realm of forgotten things.

**Real Winter.**  
A snowfall like that which has just hit Washington is not especially welcome here. This city is not accustomed to heavy deposits, and is not equipped to handle them. In the past it has had severe visitations and has suffered from them. A little more than twenty years ago it was struck by a veritable blizzard which, with high winds, heavy snow and extremely low temperature, gave the capital its worst experience within the memory of those living. The present storm is mild in comparison, severe though it is, and crippling to the public services.

One of the worst features of a local snowfall is the fact that there is no law to compel the cleaning of sidewalks. Once there was such a law, but it was negated by the courts, which ruled that inasmuch as the United States owns the sidewalks it cannot compel the owners and occupants of adjacent property to clean them. Since then the city has depended for walk cleaning upon the individual enterprise of the people, save in the few and short spaces abutting public reservations.

In a situation of this kind it is the duty of all, whatever the state of the law, to clean the walks. Each man's interest calls for know-nothingness, for his own comfort and convenience, and his neighbor's sidewalk cleaning helps him. There is a mutuality about the procedure that ought to be more effective than any statute.

Considering the depth of the snowfall and the steadiness with which it came the street car traffic has been capably moved. Both of the companies have done their utmost to clear the tracks and to move the cars, and when all things are taken into account credit is due to those in charge for the manner in which the difficult conditions have been met and in large part overcome.

Cheerfulness must be the watchword of the hour, in a situation like this. Everybody must make the best of things. There is danger in the snow, danger to the health on the score of possible illness contracted through exposure, and danger to life in the thick of traffic, which cannot be as well managed when the streets are blocked with snow as at other times. Everybody, therefore, must be especially particular.

Just as soon as the conditions permit the municipal authorities will doubtless get busy with their street-cleaning forces. The appropriation for this purpose for the fiscal year is practically intact, and even if it should be exhausted by the work entailed by the present storm it should be used to the utmost. The streets must be made free for traffic.

The suggestion that the Russian ballet be taken to Genoa is not devoid of appeal. A ballet is necessarily a highly disciplined organization, and some assurance is needed that discipline will not become entirely impossible under Russian influence.

Any kind of notoriety is more or less appreciated at the present time, and it is possible that Bergdoll enjoys the prospect of going down in history as the world's most distinguished slacker.

The financial reports make it appear quite possible that the ex-kaiser's personal income from various sources exceeds the salary of the German president. All unhappy fares the elf taking seriously himself; still we smile with old Voltaire. "Tis with mirth that safety dwells. Kindly pass the cap and bells."

Genoa landlords will also regret any disinclination of the Americans, so well known for liberality in the matter of tips, toward the idea of gathering in their midst.

Col. Bryan will not hesitate to assure James M. Cox that a defeat does not disqualify a man from reappearing as a candidate.

The military experts of France insist on regarding Germany as buster with preparations than with reparations.

**Adjournment Day.**  
The republican leaders on Capitol Hill would be well advised if they added to their purpose to put up the shutters by June 1 the words, "or as soon thereafter as may be compatible with the public interests."

Working against time in the matter of legislation is attended with difficulties and much danger. And especially is this so when the card is crowded, the measures are important, and everybody has in mind an approaching election.

hold fast to what fortune has given them. To do this they must put none but well considered laws on the books. In the campaign soon to open every act of theirs will have to pass under a strong glass. Inspection is going to be thorough. The democrats are full of hope, and girding for the struggle of their lives.

An early adjournment is desirable on several accounts, but on no account at the expense of the party's reputation for sound legislation carrying benefit to all interests. Depression is general, and it is for the party in power, obeying the mandate that called it to power, to relieve the situation, in part at least.

**The Stumper and Stumping.**  
Is the stumper destined for the discard?

The question grows out of the multiplication of the means and methods of public appeal and instruction. What is called "wall paper" has many attractive features these days. Dead walls blossom as the rose, and are used to convey many messages and much instruction.

The daily press is carrying more political matter than ever before, and clothing it in highly readable forms. And newspaper circulation has mounted to enormous figures.

The movies have developed as an advertising medium. Their patrons are almost without number; and what of quiet or serious message or picture is shown on the screen reaches large audiences.

Nevertheless and notwithstanding, the stumper is still in the ring; where force still a force to be reckoned with; still an object of interest wherever his name and fame have penetrated. People flock to see and hear him, and by their attentions and applause inspire him to his best. In the thick of it all, there are still cakes and ale for him.

The stumper is tuning up, and there are a good many of him. The year seems likely to be a fat one for him. Not only is there much to talk about, but unrest is so general people gather to hear all who are offering remedies for public ills.

**Remember the Birds!**

In weather like this remember the birds. The snow covers their food supplies and they are in danger of starving if good friends do not scatter crumbs and seeds for them. The little English sparrows are particularly to be pitied in this condition. Some people do not like them. They are noisy, quarrelsome, fussy and not particularly clean. But they are here, and unless they are exterminated they should be treated with some consideration. They really do render a service in helping to clean the streets. One can not help admiring their enterprise and fearlessness in scouting for food. When the snow covers the ground they are in a bad way. A few dry crusts thrown out to them will tide them over this difficult time. They will find such supplies. They have uncanny ways of locating them. A sort of wireless system spreads the news. If one wants to have a pronounced feeling of rendering service, put a handful of food outside of the window on some sheltered surface and watch the birds gather. It will be worth many times the trouble of such a simple act of charity.

There is a disposition to confuse farming with forestry, although the two are distinct. The farmer demands open fields, the forester demands woodland. The fact that conifers and turnips both grow from the soil is the chief point of association. Forestry has been made a matter of more or less picturesque publicity, but farming is cold, hard business.

It appears from recent legislation that Mr. Volstead earnestly and honestly disapproves of lynching—even for bootleggers.

There must be moments when China wishes her politics had been regulated by a Will Hays instead of a Confucius.

**SHOOTING STARS.**  
BY PHILANDER JOHNSON.

**Cap and Bells.**  
Kindly pass the cap and bells! With the jester, safety dwells. Socrates, with patient mind, To philosophy inclined Took, at last, his frugal lunch With a little hemlock punch. Alexander, warrior great, Met a melancholy fate As he longed for conquest new—And was conquered by home brew. Machiavelli, statesman bold Sought the story to unfold Of a prince secure and proud. Mac is hooted by the crowd. All unhappy fares the elf Taking seriously himself; Still we smile with old Voltaire. 'Tis with mirth that safety dwells. Kindly pass the cap and bells.

**Homicidal Impulse.**  
"Do you believe in capital punishment?" "Not fully," answered Senator Sorghum. "If twelve intelligent men can be so moved in feeling as to be convinced that a man ought to be killed, there ought to be some scientific consideration for the homicide defendant of impulsive and un instructed mentality."

Jud Tunkins says there's a big advantage in using long words. Anybody would rather take what you say for granted than be put to the trouble of looking in the dictionary.

**Disputation and Athletics.**  
The winter of their discontent. Makes base ball fans exclaim, "Let's finish up the argument. And play the real game!"

**Gentle Interchange.**  
"Before I married you," said the woman with the icy accent. "I said I wouldn't marry the best man living." "But you changed your mind," rejoined the husband.

"No. I went further than was necessary in keeping my word."

"De stranger!" said Uncle Eben, "always gives you de most interesting advice, but when you's lookin' for real help, you's mos' likely to git it from de old friend."

## Planned to Make Character Count in Test for U. S. Job

UNCLE SAM is probably the only employer in the world, who picks his employees almost solely by educational tests.

No business man selects his workmen by giving them mental tests. He gives them the "once over," uses his ripe judgment of men, and takes into full consideration what the applicant has done in the past.

The United States government, however, is going to use the same methods as soon as it can get around to it. President John H. Bartlett of the Civil Service Commission and his associates on the board have decided upon it.

President Harding is behind the movement to make character examinations a part of the tests for positions under the government, believing that it is in entire harmony with his avowed determination to "put more business men uses in hiring employees."

Gen. Dawes, director of the budget, has transmitted to Congress a request for an appropriation of \$40,000 to allow the Civil Service Commission to apply the tests to all service workers as well as intelligent business men uses in hiring employees.

Rather than examinations as to character or morals, President Bartlett prefers to use them "plus qualities" in speaking of the objects of the extension of the tests to civil service examinations. He feels that there are certain qualities in men, such as industry or its opposite, faithfulness or its opposite, that cannot be put down in so many words, perhaps, but are tremendous factors in manhood.

These he calls the "plus qualities." It will be to determine such attributes of manhood and womanhood that the \$40,000 appropriation, which is in addition to the regular appropriation, will be used by the commission. If the extra appropriation is granted, a new application of the "fifty-fifty" plan will be put into effect. In conducting civil service examinations under the new theory, for it is expected that applicants for positions will be given a scholarship test representing 50 per cent, and a character examination, to determine the "plus qualities," representing 50 per cent. While there may be some variations in the respective values of these two tests, the ratio will be roughly that.

Mr. Bartlett got his "big idea"—and it is a big idea, as any one acquainted with government service will realize—when he was postmaster of Portsmouth, N. H., during the McKinley and Roosevelt administrations. Later he was governor of his state, but he got this big idea while postmaster.

"It struck me at that time that the sole test for rural letter carriers, being a scholarship examination, was ridiculous," President Bartlett said. "Here was a white-faced boy who passed first, and a rugged man who passed last. The boy was given the job, when any business man in the world would have seen at a glance that the rugged fellow was the ideal carrier."

"And I believe much the same thing may be applied to almost every position under the government service. It should be universal in scope. The government needs to take more into consideration the 'plus qualities' of men and women, moral and character attributes which go to make up the intangible thing known as personality."

When Mr. Bartlett became head of the Civil Service Commission last July complaints were coming in to the commission against certain rural and other carriers of the postal service. The great war had made necessary the letting down of the bars, to some extent, and undesirable characters had found their way in. It became evident to officials here that mail thefts, to some extent, at least, were being "pulled" by men in the service, or through

## EDITORIAL DIGEST

**Auditing Europe's Books.**  
French "nerves" have apparently been irritated again by the Senate resolution, introduced by Senator McCormick calling upon the State Department to supply such information as it has in regard to the financial affairs of European governments, particularly in regard to their military expenditures. The resolution seems to the New York Times (independent democratic) "designed to give offense to France" and "it is not surprising that it is resented." The "danger" in the Senate's action, as the Chatanooga News (democratic) sees it, is that "French politicians may take American politicians too seriously," for, as the Times notes further, foreigners are not in a position to place the same estimate upon "our little great men" as do Americans.

What Senator McCormick is driving at, according to the Peoria Transcript (independent), is an effort to show the "relation between chronic deficits and military establishments" in Europe, and in presenting his resolution for adoption he produced figures, as the Port Huron (Mich.) Times-Herald (independent) quotes, "to show that there are more than two million men in arms in France, Italy, Poland, Rumania and Czechoslovakia, from a total population of only slightly more than 100,000,000. France alone has an army of 800,000, Italy 450,000 and Poland 450,000. To these statistics 'Globe' (independent) adds the fact that on paper an effective reply," says the New York Globe (independent), in which he shows that the French army, coterie before the war, "but after close analysis of Lausanne's figures the Globe concludes that 'the advantage still seems to lie with Senator McCormick.' The Paris Temps also asks, somewhat bitterly, if it is the intention of the United States to use this information to intimidate France," and as the San Antonio Light (independent) interprets its attitude, it considers "the resolution as a threat to look over their books 'an insult to French pride.'"

But why all this "furious rumpus" in the French press? The Chicago Tribune (independent republican) wonders "why the prompt assumption that the resolution is aimed at injuring France in some mysterious way? Why sarcastic and embittered recriminations against American 'policy makers'?" Americans "are trying to make every allowance for the French mood," but the Tribune insists.

"We cannot go to the extreme of shutting our eyes to the conditions with which we must deal or blindly underwrite any French policy or the policy any other government elects to pursue. Our government has a clear right to all the information they can get, it should be necessary to assert, in the resolution, the McCormick resolution is to us not only astonishing, but ominous. Nothing, it seems to us, could be more legitimate than that the Senate should inform itself on the matters named in the resolution."

France's attitude is contrasted to that of Italy by the Springfield Republican

(independent), which reports that "a spokesman for Italy" declared that his country "would welcome such an investigation as Senator McCormick proposed; he expressed, moreover, the belief that it would give the United States a useful insight into the situation in Europe."

"It will hardly do," the Duluth Herald (independent) feels, "to say that it is none of our business what European nations do with their money," for to a considerable extent European military establishments are being kept up "on our money." Therefore, "the position is soundly taken in the Senate," the St. Louis Post-Dispatch (independent) thinks, "that if France can afford to maintain armies and fleets that are a menace to the peace of the world while other powers wish to unite in an agreement to reduce armaments, she can afford to meet her financial obligations to America," or, if she cannot afford "both of these expenditures, demand should be made of her to make the expenditure which is least menacing to the world's peace. Her policy, the paper holds, should be the one of 'gesture of protest' which she now resents."

**Attempting to Revive a Once Great Party.**  
Only a general election can show how far British public opinion responds to the challenge flung at the coalition government by the independent Liberals, for whom former Premier Asquith and Viscount Grey are the chief spokesmen. These men assisted Lloyd George and all his works at a meeting held in London. The keynote of the occasion was struck by Asquith, who declared that he accepted a title his great father persistently refused, and who said in his address to the meeting that he would enter the lists and take the field against Mr. Lloyd George and his coalition government.

A strong opposition is a necessity under any system of popular government. The liberal party is the only such force in this country. In England, most unprejudiced observers are confident that if an election were held next week the coalition cabinet, which Lord Grey has resigned, would be returned to power by a handsome majority.

However, the coalition principle cannot be applied indefinitely. "An end must come to it some time, and when it does come a revival and strengthened liberal party may once more take up the reins of government. Mr. Asquith and Lord Grey have a heavy task of reconstruction. But they are not wanting in either ability or courage—Brooklyn Eagle (independent democratic)."

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